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## Sexual Harassment in the Active-Duty Navy: Findings from the 1991 Navy-Wide Survey

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### Authors

Amy L. Culbertson  
Paul Rosenfeld  
Carol E. Newell

### Reviewed by

Patricia J. Thomas

Director, Women and  
Multicultural Research  
Office

### Approved and Released by

John D. McAfee

Captain, U.S. Navy  
Commanding Officer

Richard C. Sorenson

Technical Director  
(Acting)

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13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) This report presents the sexual harassment findings from the second administration of the Navy Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment Survey (NEOSH) in 1991. This survey assesses the occurrence, types, and consequences of sexual harassment for active-duty personnel. It also measures perceptions concerning organizational climate and leader's support in eliminating harassment in the Navy. Forty-four percent of female enlisted and 33% of female officer respondents indicated that they had been sexually harassed during the 1-year survey period. Very small percentages of male enlisted (8%) and male officer (2%) respondents reported sexual harassment. These findings indicate a statistically significant increase from the results of the 1989 NEOSH Survey for two groups: female officer and male enlisted personnel. Details about the type of harassment, characteristics of victims and perpetrators, and actions taken are compared between the 1989 and 1991 surveys. In addition, explanations for the differences in the occurrence rates found by various military surveys are addressed.					
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# Foreword

This report is one of two reports describing the findings from the second Navy-wide administration of the Navy Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment (NEOSH) Survey in October 1991. This report presents the sexual harassment findings for Navy active-duty personnel.

The NEOSH Survey was sponsored by the Equal Opportunity Division of the Bureau of Naval Personnel (PERS-61) and was funded by reimbursable work request number N0002293WREE500. The results are expected to benefit the Navy by providing empirical data concerning the occurrence, forms, and effects of sexual harassment among active-duty personnel.

The authors wish to thank CAPT Everette Greene for his support and leadership throughout the project, along with his review of the project's findings and this report. The authors also thank RADM Roberta Hazard for her support in promulgating the findings to senior Navy leaders. The authors appreciated the review and report comments provided by CDR Clarence Willis and LCDR Ann Painter.

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JOHN D. McAFEE  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Commanding Officer

RICHARD C. SORENSON  
Technical Director (Acting)

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# Summary

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## Purpose

Information from a variety of sources indicates that sexual harassment continues to be a serious organizational problem for the U.S. Navy. The Navy Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment (NEOSH) Survey project was initiated in 1989 to measure the amount and types of harassment occurring among active-duty personnel. This report focuses on the second administration of the survey in 1991.

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## Approach

A stratified random sample of 12,006 active-duty enlisted and officer personnel received the NEOSH Survey in the fall of 1991. The survey was anonymous and was mailed to members' duty stations around the world. The 1991 survey was very similar to that administered in 1989 to allow the comparison of data over two years. Additional items were added to the 1991 survey to measure perceptions about the organizational climate towards sexual harassment and the impact of the harassment in terms of time lost from work and health effects.

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## Findings

Forty-four percent of female enlisted and 33% of female officer respondents indicated that they had been sexually harassed during the 1-year survey period. Very small percentages of male enlisted (8%) and male officer (2%) respondents reported sexual harassment. When comparing these results to those found in 1989, a statistically significant increase was found in the percentage of female officers and male enlisted personnel who reported being harassed.

In general, the pattern of the 1991 results replicated those found in the 1989 NEOSH Survey. Victims of harassment tend to be overrepresented among the junior women compared to their midcareer or senior counterparts. African-American and Hispanic women did not report more harassment than White women. Lastly, the majority of harassment perpetrators are men who are either co-workers or supervisors.

There were some positive findings from the 1991 survey. Both officer and enlisted women were more apt to feel that the actions they took after the harassment were effective in 1991 compared to 1989. Enlisted women reported they were more likely to tell the perpetrator to stop the harassing behavior. In addition, significantly more women in 1991 said the reason they did not file a grievance was because their other actions worked.

Areas of continuing concern included not only the increase in the overall rate among female officers and enlisted men in 1991, but also the increase in several types of sexual harassment behaviors (e.g., teasing, remarks, staring, and gestures). The 1991 results highlight the significant impact harassment has on personnel. Over half of the enlisted women and a third of the female officers reported physical effects caused by sexual harassment; almost 90% of both groups reported psychological effects. Some women reported using sick call and unplanned leave/liberty because of sexual harassment.

The 1991 NEOSH Survey results were compared with those of other military sexual harassment surveys. Data suggest that differences in rates obtained by these surveys were related to the way questions about sexual harassment were asked, and subsequent rates of harassment were calculated. Data from the research version of the NEOSH furthered our understanding of methodological issues in the measurement of sexual harassment through organizational surveys.

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## Conclusions

The results of the 1991 NEOSH Survey indicate that sexual harassment continues to be a problem for the Navy's active-duty force, despite concerted efforts to eliminate it. However, most respondents believe that things are being done in the Navy to try to stop sexual harassment. Changing behaviors in the workplace is the Navy's initial challenge. Subsequent changes in attitudes and organizational culture will be more complex, requiring leadership and commitment.

In the wake of the Tailhook Association convention scandal, the Navy reiterated its zero-tolerance of sexual harassment policy, instituted mandatory separation of individuals for serious sexual harassment offenses, and required that all Navy personnel attend a full-day prevention of sexual harassment training. The results of the next administration of the NEOSH Survey in 1993 will undoubtedly provide an indicator of the effectiveness of these policies and training in combating sexual harassment in the active-duty Navy.

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## **Recommendations**

1. The Chief of Naval Operations promulgate the 1991 NEOSH Survey findings to commanding officers to provide them with empirical data concerning the occurrence of sexual harassment and its impact on active-duty personnel.
2. The Chief of Naval Education and Training (CNET OOQM) integrate the survey findings into Command Training Team instructor training conducted at CNET Command Managed Equal Opportunity (CMEO) training sites. It is recommended that the survey findings also be integrated into the Navy's annual sexual harassment training and CMEO training given by authorized Equal Opportunity Program Specialists (EOPS).
3. Given the sensitivity and importance of the Navy's efforts to prevent sexual harassment, it is recommended that the findings presented here be made widely available to Navy media.

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## Background

In the aftermath of the October 1991 Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas Senate hearings and incidents of sexual assault of women at the 1991 Tailhook Association convention, sexual harassment has gone from an organizational issue of some concern to a high priority issue demanding quick and effective action. The fallout from these highly publicized incidents increased focus on the prevalence, causes, and consequences of sexual harassment in civilian and military settings.

Sexual harassment has been recognized as a serious organizational problem for more than two decades (MacKinnon, 1979; Working Women's Institute, 1975), although widespread concern about addressing it has been a more recent phenomenon. Formal recognition of sexual harassment as an organizational issue can be traced to the early 1980s, when the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) released guidelines interpreting sexual harassment as a violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (EEOC, 1980).

Shortly after the release of the EEOC guidelines, the United States Merit Systems Protection Board (USMSPB) initiated the first wide-scale survey of sexual harassment among federal government employees (USMSPB, 1981). The USMSPB reported a number of findings that were replicated in their second administration of the same survey in 1987 (USMSPB, 1988). Most notably, the majority of harassment victims were women, although 14% of men reported being harassed. Women were more likely to be harassed if they worked in a predominantly male environment or in nontraditional jobs, had a male supervisor, and were young.

The most common perpetrators of harassment were co-workers and supervisors. Almost all those who were harassed used informal methods to deal with the problem, with the most common actions being to ignore the behavior, to avoid the person, or to tell the person to stop. Very few victims of harassment took formal actions against the perpetrators. Other studies of sexual harassment in different settings over the past 10 years have replicated many of these findings (Fain & Anderton, 1987; Gruber & Bjorn, 1982; Gutek, 1985; Lafontaine & Tredeau, 1986; Rigor, 1991; Sandroff, 1988).

These studies and surveys found that sexual harassment is a serious organizational problem which can result in major costs to individuals and organizations (Crull, 1982; Gutek, 1985; Jensen & Gutek, 1982; Maze, 1992; Terpstra & Baker, 1991). Individuals who experience sexual harassment often report negative psychological, physical, and interpersonal effects (Gutek, 1985; Gutek & Koss,

1993; Terpstra & Baker, 1991). Sexual harassment may lead to lowered morale and productivity, absenteeism and transfers, and turnover (USMSPB, 1988; Terpstra & Baker, 1991).

Even before Tailhook, sexual harassment had become an issue of concern for the military in general and the Navy in particular. In the Navy, the occurrence of sexual harassment had previously been documented (Carey, 1982), although focused attention on this problem did not occur until the latter years of the 1980s. (See Appendix A for a timeline of significant Navy events.) At this time, concerns raised by the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Military Services resulted in the Secretary of Defense sponsoring a Department of Defense (DOD) Task Force on Women in the Military. The Task Force studied issues related to the integration of women in the armed forces, with specific emphasis on sexual harassment. The Task Force found that sexual harassment was a significant problem in all military services.

A series of recommendations made by the Task Force included standardizing the definition of sexual harassment across all the military services and administering a survey to accurately determine the extent of sexual harassment among active-duty personnel (Department of Defense, 1988). In response to these recommendations, the Secretary of Defense issued a memorandum to all the services instructing them to amend their policies and regulations for both military and civilian personnel to include the DOD's definition of sexual harassment (Secretary of Defense, 1988). This definition is similar to that in the 1980 EEOC guidelines. In addition, the Secretary sponsored the 1988 DOD Survey of Sex Roles in the Active-Duty Military, the largest and most comprehensive survey of sexual harassment ever conducted, which was administered between December 1987 and December 1988 (Martindale, 1990, 1991).

During the same period, the Chief of Naval Operations tasked a Navy Women's Study Group to conduct an in-depth review of women's career issues, including the assessment of real and perceived sexual harassment in the Navy. The Study Group found that more than half of the 1,400 women interviewed in ten locations worldwide had been victims of some form of sexual harassment while in the Navy (Chief of Naval Operations, 1987). Because the sample was not scientifically representative of the active-duty Navy, one of the Study Group's recommendations was that a biennial Navy-wide survey of sexual harassment be initiated.

In 1989, the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center developed and administered the Navy Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment (NEOSH) Survey, following the methods used by other large-scale sexual harassment surveys conducted by the USMSPB and the DOD (USMSPB, 1981, 1988; Martindale, 1990). The first administration of the survey was mailed to a stratified random

sample of more than 10,000 active-duty enlisted and officer personnel in the Fall of 1989. As reported by Culbertson, Rosenfeld, Booth-Kewley and Magnusson (1992), 42% of enlisted women and 26% of female officer respondents indicated that they had been sexually harassed during the 1-year survey period while on duty or on base or ship while off duty. Very small percentages of the enlisted men (4%) and male officers (1%) reported being sexually harassed during the same period.

Following the 1989 administration of the NEOSH Survey, the Navy experienced a number of highly publicized cases of sexual harassment (Donovan, 1990; Glionna, 1990; Mitchell, 1990). In response to these incidents, the Navy restated its policy regarding sexual harassment (Secretary of the Navy, 1989), required the delivery of Navy-wide sexual harassment prevention training (Culbertson et al., 1992), and sponsored another Navy Women's Study Group (Secretary of the Navy, 1990).

The results of the second study group were released in April 1991, and recommendations were made to: (1) reaffirm the Navy's strong emphasis on the unacceptability of sexual harassment, (2) strengthen sexual harassment prevention training, and (3) improve reporting, tracking, and enforcement procedures (Chief of Naval Operations, 1991). The second administration of the NEOSH Survey occurred in the Fall of 1991, when reports began to surface about events at the 1991 Tailhook Association convention.

This report presents the results from the 1991 administration of the NEOSH Survey and interprets the findings in light of those from 1989. It also provides empirical data regarding the effects of sexual harassment on those who are harassed in terms of psychological, physical, and work-related outcomes. Lastly, it presents research findings clarifying discrepancies in overall rates of harassment obtained by various military surveys.

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# **The 1991 Navy Equal Opportunity/ Sexual Harassment (NEOSH) Survey**

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## **Standard Version of Survey**

The sexual harassment survey questions make up the second part of the Navy Equal Opportunity (NEOSH) Survey (see Appendix B). (See Rosenfeld, Culbertson, Booth-Kewley, & Magnusson, 1991, for the equal opportunity results from the NEOSH.) The 1991 survey questions covered several areas: (1) perceptions about sexual harassment, (2) the occurrence of sexual harassment, (3) the forms and frequency of sexual harassment behaviors, (4) victim and perpetrator characteristics, and (5) the actions and effects resulting from sexual harassment experiences. While the sexual harassment survey is modeled after previous large-scale sexual harassment surveys, it is tailored to capture the unique experiences of Navy life. The 1991 NEOSH Survey closely follows the 1989 version so data could be compared over time.

### **Definition**

The sexual harassment section of the NEOSH Survey begins by stating the DOD official definition of sexual harassment used by all military services (Secretary of Defense, 1988). This definition follows closely the EEOC definition, which is a widely used definition of sexual harassment in government and the private sector (Culbertson & Rosenfeld, 1993). In addition, a statement following the definition clarifies that both men and women can be victims of sexual harassment, both women and men can be sexual harassers, and people can sexually harass persons of their own sex.

### **Perceptions**

Following the definition, all respondents are asked to agree or disagree, using a five-point Likert scale, with nine statements addressing issues related to sexual harassment in the Navy. This section of the survey is designed to assess perceptions of support for sexual harassment prevention, the degree to which respondents understand what constitutes sexual harassment, and to what extent sexual harassment occurs in their commands. In essence, these items reflect the organizational climate—that is, the extent to which active-duty personnel share perceptions regarding tolerance for

harassment in the Navy workplace (Fitzgerald & Shullman, 1993). An awareness of organizational climate is becoming recognized as a key factor in an organization's ability to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace (Culbertson & Rosenfeld, 1993).

### **Occurrence**

Following these perceptual items, respondents are asked directly if they have been sexually harassed. Specifically, the following two questions are posed: (1) "During the past year, have you been sexually harassed while on duty?" and (2) "During the past year, have you been sexually harassed on base or ship while off duty?" A broad interpretation of the work environment is used "...because people in the active military are essentially on call 24 hours per day, [and] work related sexual harassment could potentially occur in a variety of different settings not typical of a civilian's job experiences...in an open work area, on base grounds, in the field/at sea..." (Pryor, 1988, p. 9). This broad scope recognizes and accommodates the Navy's unique situation where members work, live, and relax in the same environment (e.g., aboard ships). Respondents who answer "no" to both of the questions listed above are finished with the survey. Those who answer "yes" to either or both of these questions are asked to complete the survey.

### **Behaviors**

The next section of the survey asks what forms of sexual harassment behaviors respondents have experienced during the past year. Eight categories of behavior are described. The 1991 version used categories that were identical to those used in 1989 and are similar to those used on two other large scale surveys on sexual harassment (Martindale, 1990; USMSPB, 1988). A five-point response scale is provided to indicate the frequency of the behavior, ranging from "Never" to "Once a week or more."

### **Information About Experiences**

As in the 1989 survey and in other large scale surveys of sexual harassment (Martindale, 1990; USMSPB, 1988), respondents are then instructed to pick the one sexual harassment experience during the survey year that had the greatest effect on them and to answer the remaining questions in regards to this specific sexual harassment experience. Questions about this experience follow, such as: how many people were involved in the harassment, whether they were men or women, and their work relationship to the respondents.

## **Actions and Effects**

Those who were harassed are also asked what actions they took after the harassment experience, including if they filed a formal grievance, and if not, why. Organizational and individual consequences due to the sexual harassment experience were explored with new items added to the 1991 survey (e.g., lost work time, physical and psychological effects).

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## **Research Version of Survey**

Because the Navy-Wide Personnel Survey (NPS) (Quenette, 1992) reported substantially higher rates of sexual harassment than those found by the 1989 NEOSH Survey, a research version of the 1991 NEOSH Survey (see Appendix C) was developed to explore why these differences were obtained. It was hypothesized that the differences in the sexual harassment rates were due to the different methodologies used in the two surveys. Therefore, the research version, using NPS as a model, did not ask respondents directly if they had been sexually harassed as is done on the standard NEOSH Survey, but asked about unwanted sexual behaviors. A rate of harassment was calculated based on these data. This methodology has been used by other well known sexual harassment surveys (Martindale, 1990; USMSPB, 1981, 1988).

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## **Sample and Administration**

A stratified random sample of active-duty enlisted (E-2 through E-9) and officer (O-1 through O-6) Navy personnel was selected for the 1991 survey administration. Since the survey was intended to address sexual harassment and equal opportunity issues, the sample was stratified on gender, officer and enlisted status, and three categories of racial/ethnic groups (African-American, Hispanic, and White). In general, the sampling was such that the results can be generalized to specific Navy subpopulations (e.g., female enlisted, female officers, male enlisted, and male officers) with a sampling error of plus or minus 5% or less.

In October 1991, a total of 12,006 questionnaires were mailed directly to Navy members at their duty stations around the world. The survey was anonymous to encourage honest responses. Data collection lasted for 3 months. By December 1991, 5,333 completed questionnaires had been returned. After adjusting for the number of undeliverable surveys and those that could not be analyzed, the response rate was 48%.

## **Data Weighting and Analysis**

Post-stratification weighting (Henry, 1990) of the data by gender, paygrade, and racial/ethnic group was performed so the respondents would accurately reflect the proportions of these groups in the Navy population at the time of survey administration. All reported results are based on the weighted data. Frequency data were analyzed using chi-square tests for significance. Because there were a large number of comparisons, the significance level for all tests was  $p \leq .01$ . A significance level of  $p \leq .01$  means that in only 1 of 100 instances of a chance relationship would the conclusion be reached that there was a "true difference." Many of the survey questions allowed for multiple responses, so response percentages for those questions may sum to more than 100%. For clarity of presentation, responses to items using five-point Likert scales were collapsed into three categories: "agree," "neither agree nor disagree," and "disagree."

Three conventions are used to report survey results; "respondents" refers to all individuals who completed surveys, "victims" includes those respondents who said they were sexually harassed, and "perpetrators" are those who allegedly sexually harassed others. Where applicable, data are reported for females and males, but female responses are analyzed in more depth because a much higher percentage of women reported harassment.

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### Perceptions

In general, perceptions about sexual harassment were similar on the 1989 and 1991 surveys. Fifty-nine percent of enlisted women versus 38% of enlisted men agreed with the statement that sexual harassment is a problem in the Navy [ $X^2 (1, N = 1,534) = 66.52, p \leq .001$ ]; the numbers were 61% for female officers versus 36% for male officers [ $X^2 (1, N = 1,140) = 87.47, p \leq .001$ ]. These findings represent slight, statistically non-significant changes from the 1989 results.

Fifty percent of enlisted personnel and more than half of officers (57% of women and 61% of men) agreed that "sexual harassment training is taken seriously at this command;" no significant gender difference was found on this item. Thirty-two percent of enlisted women versus 19% of enlisted men agreed with the statement that "people at this command who sexually harass others usually get away with it" [ $X^2 (1, N = 1,533) = 47.96, p \leq .001$ ]; the numbers were 22% for female officers compared to 6% for male officers [ $X^2 (1, N = 1,130) = 66.71, p \leq .001$ ]. These questions were not asked in 1989.

Almost all officers (90% of men and 88% of women) and about three-fourths of enlisted personnel (79% of men and 73% of women) agreed that "actions are being taken in the Navy to prevent sexual harassment." Although the majority of enlisted personnel agreed that "I know what kinds of words or actions are sexual harassment," a significantly higher percentage (91%) of women agreed with this item compared to the percentage (84%) of men [ $X^2 (1, N = 1,536) = 15.45, p \leq .01$ ]; the same finding was true for officers (92% of women and 89% of men) [ $X^2 (1, N = 1,139) = 19.56, p \leq .01$ ].

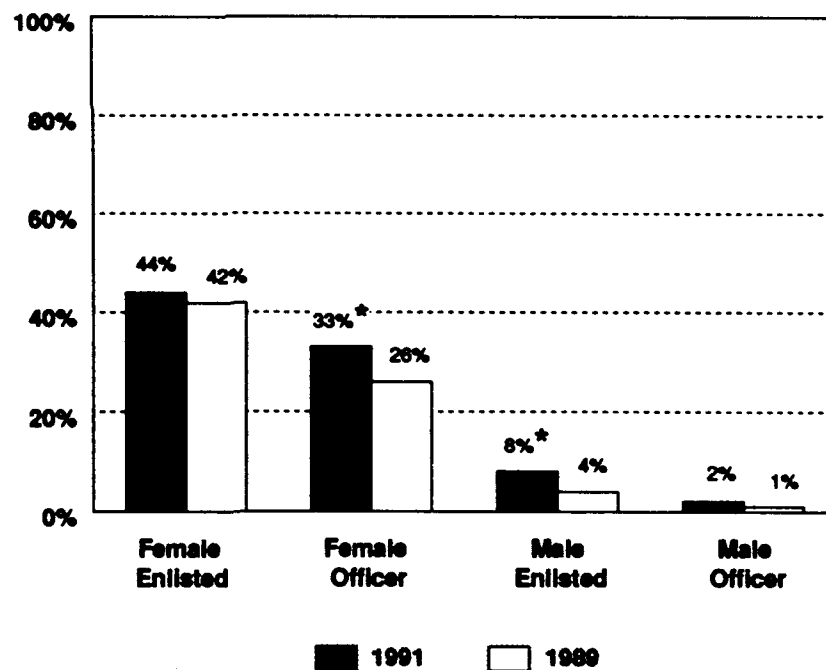


## Occurrence

Table 1 shows the percentage of respondents who answered that they had been sexually harassed during the 1-year survey period. Figure 1 compares the rates found in 1991 with those found in 1989.

**Table 1**  
**1991 Rates of Sexual Harassment Reported  
by Population Group**

	Number	Percent	Sampling Error
Female Enlisted	1,022	44%	±3%
Female Officer	570	33%	±4%
Male Enlisted	521	8%	±2%
Male Officer	570	2%	±1%



\*Significant increase ( $p \leq .01$ )

**Figure 1. Percentage who said they were sexually harassed  
in 1991 compared to 1989.**

A statistically significant increase in the percentage reporting being sexually harassed was found for female officers [ $X^2(1, N = 1,418) = 7.90, p \leq .01$ ] and male enlisted service members [ $X^2(1, N = 2,226) = 13.24, p \leq .001$ ]. No statistically significant increase was found for enlisted females or male officers.

### Forms of Behaviors

The results concerning the actual forms or types of sexual harassment behaviors experienced are reported in Tables 2 through 4. It should be noted that many victims indicated experiencing more than one form of harassment behavior. Table 2 shows the percentage of female enlisted respondents who experienced each form of behavior at least once in 1991 and 1989. The stars in Table 2 indicate percentages that have significantly increased in 1991 compared to 1989: (1) unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions [ $X^2(1, N = 2,762) = 9.28, p \leq .01$ ] and (2) sexual looks, staring, or gestures [ $X^2(1, N = 2,762) = 9.29, p \leq .01$ ].

**Table 2**  
**Forms of Sexual Harassment Behaviors Directed**  
**Toward Female Enlisted Personnel**

Behavior	Percentage of Respondents	
	1991	1989
Unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions	45%*	39%
Unwanted sexual looks, staring, or gestures	43%*	37%
Unwanted sexual whistles, calls, hoots, or yells	40%	36%
Unwanted deliberate touching, leaning over, cornering, or pinching	32%	29%
Unwanted pressure for dates	30%	27%
Unwanted letters, phone calls, or materials of a sexual nature	16%	17%
Unwanted pressure for sexual favors	17%	14%
Actual or attempted rape or assault	6%	6%

Note. Multiple responses allowed.

\*Significant increase ( $p \leq .01$ )

Table 3 shows the percentage of male enlisted respondents who experienced each form of harassment at least once in 1991 and 1989. There were no significant differences when comparing the percentages in 1991 to those found in 1989. The data for male enlisted should be viewed with caution because only a small number of respondents reported harassment.

**Table 3**  
**Forms of Sexual Harassment Behaviors Directed**  
**Toward Male Enlisted Personnel**

Behavior	Percentage of Respondents	
	1991	1989
Unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions	8%	3%
Unwanted sexual looks, staring, or gestures	8%	2%
Unwanted sexual whistles, calls, hoots, or yells	6%	2%
Unwanted deliberate touching, leaning over, cornering, or pinching	6%	3%
Unwanted pressure for dates	2%	2%
Unwanted letters, phone calls, or materials of a sexual nature	3%	1%
Unwanted pressure for sexual favors	2%	1%
Actual or attempted rape or assault	0.5%	0.4%

Note. Multiple responses allowed.

Table 4 shows the percentage of female officer respondents who experienced each form of harassment at least once in 1991 and 1989. Similar to female enlisted, percentages in two behavior categories have significantly increased since 1989: (1) unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions [ $X^2(1, N = 1,418) = 11.02, p \leq .001$ ] and (2) sexual looks, staring, or gestures [ $X^2(1, N = 1,418) = 7.16, p \leq .01$ ]. The small number of male officers who were harassed precluded conducting additional breakdowns in terms of sexual harassment behaviors.

### **Paygrade and Harassment**

Consistent with other sexual harassment surveys (Martindale, 1990; USMSPB, 1988), lower-level personnel report more sexual harassment than higher-level personnel (i.e., enlisted personnel in lower paygrades and officer personnel in lower ranks experience more harassment). As found in the 1989 survey, junior women were most

**Table 4**  
**Forms of Sexual Harassment Behaviors Directed**  
**Toward Female Officers**

Behavior	Percentage of Respondents	
	1991	1989
Unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, remarks, or questions	31%*	23%
Unwanted sexual looks, staring, or gestures	24%*	18%
Unwanted sexual whistles, calls, hoots, or yells	19%	17%
Unwanted deliberate touching, leaning over, cornering, or pinching	13%	13%
Unwanted pressure for dates	9%	10%
Unwanted letters, phone calls, or materials of a sexual nature	9%	6%
Unwanted pressure for sexual favors	3%	3%
Actual or attempted rape or assault	0.8%	0.9%

Note. Multiple responses allowed.

\*Significant increase ( $p \leq .01$ )

likely to be sexually harassed. About half of junior enlisted (52% of E-2 to E-3) and mid-level enlisted women (42% of E-4 to E-6) were harassed, compared to about one third of senior enlisted women (35% of E-7 to E-9). Thus, a significant difference was found by paygrade for enlisted women [ $X^2(2, N = 1,015) = 11.47, p \leq .001$ ]. Although the harassment rate for junior female officers was higher (38% of O-1 to O-2) than that for mid-level (33% of O-3 to O-4) or senior (24% of O-4 to O-6) officers, this difference was not significant.

A similar pattern was found for enlisted men, where junior men reported more harassment (14% of E-2 to E-3, 7% of E-4 to E-6, and 2% of E-7 to E-9), but the percentages did not significantly differ at the  $p \leq .01$  level. As Table 5 shows, there was a significant increase in 1991 compared to 1989 in the percentage of E-2 to E-3 enlisted males who were harassed [ $X^2(1, N = 558) = 6.74, p \leq .01$ ]. No significant paygrade differences were found for either female enlisted or female officer personnel between the 1989 and 1991 administrations.

**Table 5**  
**Percentage of Respondents who were**  
**Sexually Harassed by Paygroup**

Paygroup	Female		Male	
	1991	1989	1991	1989
<b>Enlisted</b>				
E2-E3	51%	47%	13%*	6%
E4-E6	42%	40%	7%	4%
E7-E9	35%	33%	2%	2%
<b>Officer</b>				
O1-O2	38%	28%	2%	1%
O3-O4	33%	27%	2%	1%
O5-O6	24%	9%	2%	1%

\*Significant increase ( $p \leq .01$ )

### **Racial/Ethnic Group and Harassment**

The percentages of African-American, Hispanic, and White female respondents who were harassed were compared to explore the hypothesis that racial/ethnic minorities may experience more harassment than majority members (DeFour, 1990; Fain & Anderton, 1987; Terpstra, 1993). Among enlisted women, sexual harassment rates in 1991 were 41% for African-Americans, 48% for Hispanics, and 45% for Whites (see Table 6). Thus, while African-American enlisted women were harassed significantly less than White and Hispanic enlisted women responding to the 1989 NIOSH Survey, the harassment rates did not differ significantly in 1991.

For female officers, the rates for the three groups in 1991 were: African-American (29%), Hispanic (32%), and White (34%), demonstrating no significant difference among the groups. Only one significant difference was found when comparing the two survey periods within racial/ethnic group: the percentage of White female officers who were harassed significantly increased from 25% in 1989 to 34% in 1991 [ $X^2(1, N = 840) = 7.60, p \leq .01$ ]. Racial/ethnic comparisons for males were not possible due to small sample sizes in each racial/ethnic group.

**Table 6**  
**Percentage Sexually Harassed by Racial/Ethnic Group**

Paygroup	Female Enlisted		Female Officer	
	1991	1989	1991	1989
White	45%	45%	34%*	25%
African-American	41%	33%	29%	29%
Hispanic	48%	44%	32%	39%

\*Significant increase ( $p \leq .01$ ).

## Experiences

As done in other sexual harassment surveys, those who were sexually harassed were asked to focus on the harassment experience that had the greatest effect on them and answer questions specific to that experience. They were asked questions about who harassed them, actions they took after the harassment, and the effect the harassment had on them personally and professionally. Due to the small number of males reporting harassment, the results that follow focus on women.

### Perpetrator Characteristics

#### *Harassment by One or More Persons*

Table 7 displays the responses in 1991 and 1989 to the question "how many people harassed you?" In 1991, the majority of enlisted women (55%) and female officers (61%) reported that the harassment involved only one person. A sizable percentage (37% of enlisted women and 36% of female officers) said the harassment involved 2 or 3 people. A small percentage (8% of enlisted women and 3% of female officers) reported the involvement of 4 or more people. The percentage of enlisted women who said the harassment involved 4 or more people had decreased significantly from 14% in 1989 [ $X^2(1, N = 1,178) = 9.02, p \leq .01$ ].

#### *Gender*

Almost all of the harassment of female enlisted and officer victims was by male perpetrators. Table 8 presents these findings.

#### *Organizational Status*

Figure 2 shows the organizational status of perpetrators as reported by female enlisted victims. There was very little change in the percentages since 1989. Co-workers are still the most frequent perpetrators, followed by supervisors—of which 16% were immediate supervisors and 24% were higher-level supervisors—and then

**Table 7**  
**How Many People Harassed You?**

	Female Enlisted		Female Officer	
	1991	1989	1991	1989
1 Person	55%	52%	61%	54%
2-3 People	37%	34%	36%	42%
4 or More	8%*	14%	3%	5%

\*Significant decrease ( $p \leq .001$ )

**Table 8**  
**Gender of Sexual Harassment Perpetrators**

	Female Enlisted		Female Officer	
	1991	1989	1991	1989
Male Perpetrators	95%*	99%	98%	99%
Female Perpetrators	1%	1%	0%	1%
Both	4%	—	2%	—

Note. The "Both" category was not included on the 1989 survey.

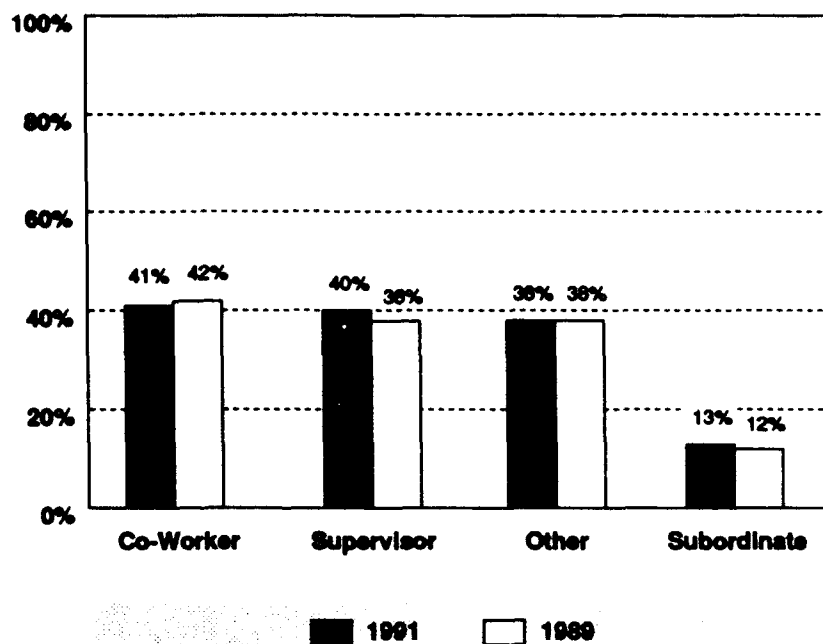
\*Significant decrease ( $p \leq .001$ )

"other." Note that multiple responses were allowed to account for those situations where people were harassed by more than one perpetrator.

The civilian/military status of perpetrators as reported by female enlisted victims is presented in Figure 3. Again, almost identical percentages were obtained in 1991 compared to 1989. A new category added to the 1991 survey, "overseas host," accounted for a very small percentage of the perpetrators.

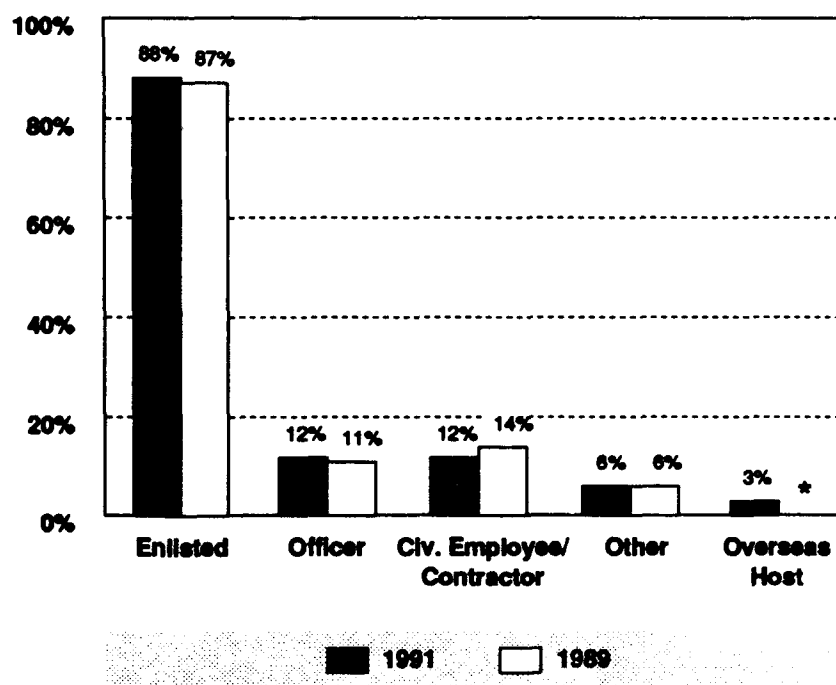
The organizational status of perpetrators as reported by female officer victims is displayed in Figure 4. It shows a decrease in the percentage of supervisors harassing subordinates (13% were immediate supervisors and 23% were higher-level supervisors) at  $p \leq .01$ . Although sizable, the decrease was not statistically significant at  $p \leq .01$ .

The civilian/military status of alleged perpetrators for female officer victims is presented in Figure 5. The civilian employee/contractor percentage has dropped significantly since 1989 [ $X^2(1, N = 413) = 7.24, p \leq .01$ ].



Note. Multiple responses allowed.

**Figure 2. Organizational status of perpetrators reported by female enlisted victims.**

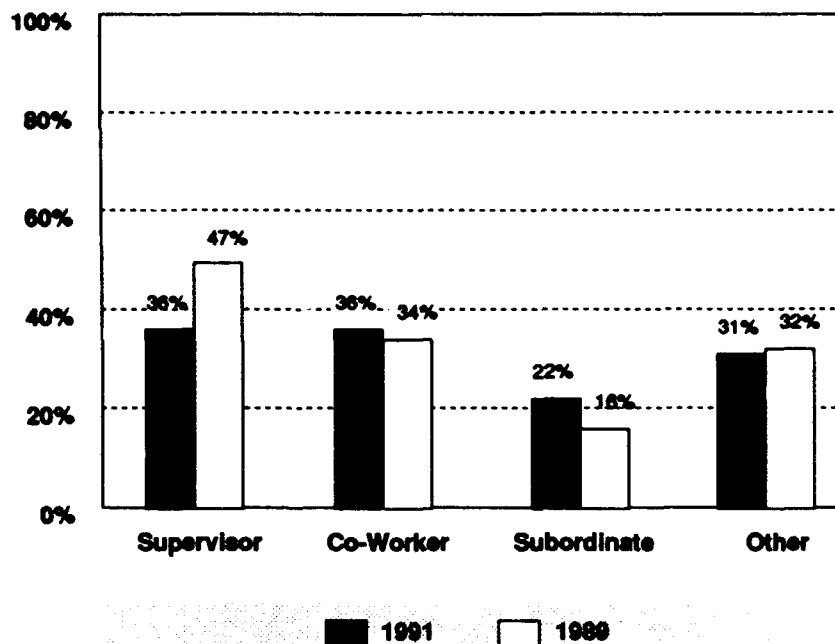


Note. Multiple responses allowed.

\*Overseas Host was not on the 1989 survey.

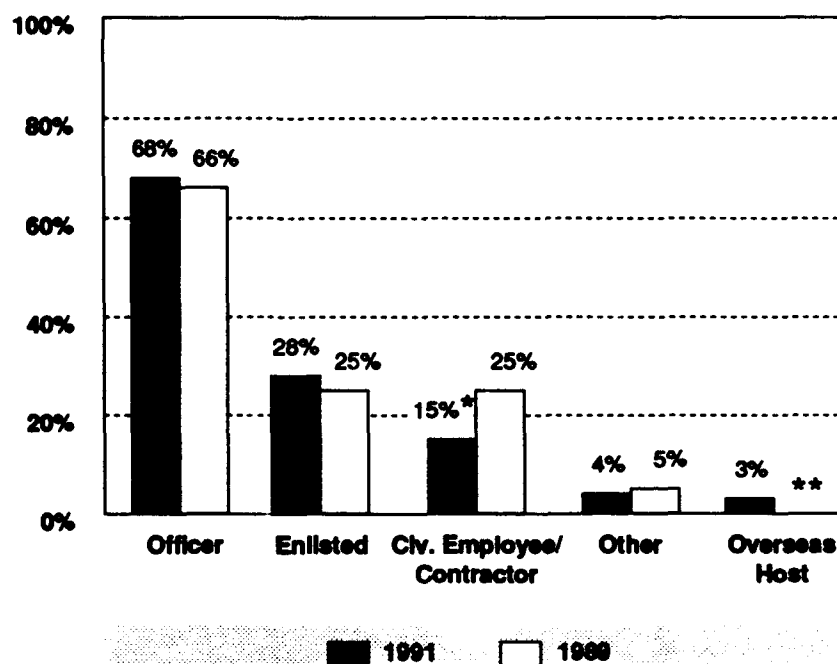
**Figure 3. Civilian/military status of perpetrators as reported by female enlisted victims.**





Note. Multiple responses allowed.

**Figure 4. Organizational status of perpetrators as reported by female officer victims.**



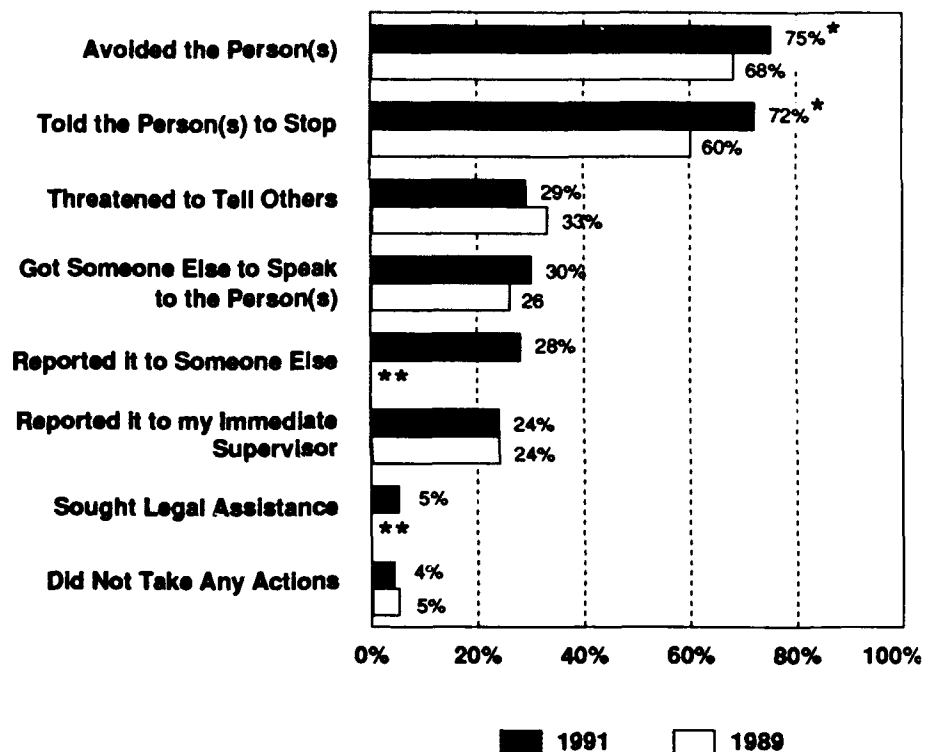
Note. Multiple responses allowed.

\*Significant decrease ( $p \leq .01$ )  
 \*\*Overseas Host was not on the 1999 survey.

**Figure 5. Civilian/military status of perpetrators as reported by female officer victims.**

## Actions Taken

Figures 6 and 7 present the different actions taken by female enlisted victims after being sexually harassed. The two most common actions for victims were to avoid the perpetrator(s) and to tell the person(s) to stop. A smaller percentage of female victims stated that they threatened to tell others, reported it to someone else, or reported the experience to their immediate supervisors. While these findings are similar to 1989, percentages in two action categories significantly increased for enlisted women: avoiding the perpetrator [ $X^2(1, N = 1,178) = 6.47, p \leq .01$ ] and telling the perpetrator to stop [ $X^2(1, N = 1,178) = 16.94, p \leq .001$ ].

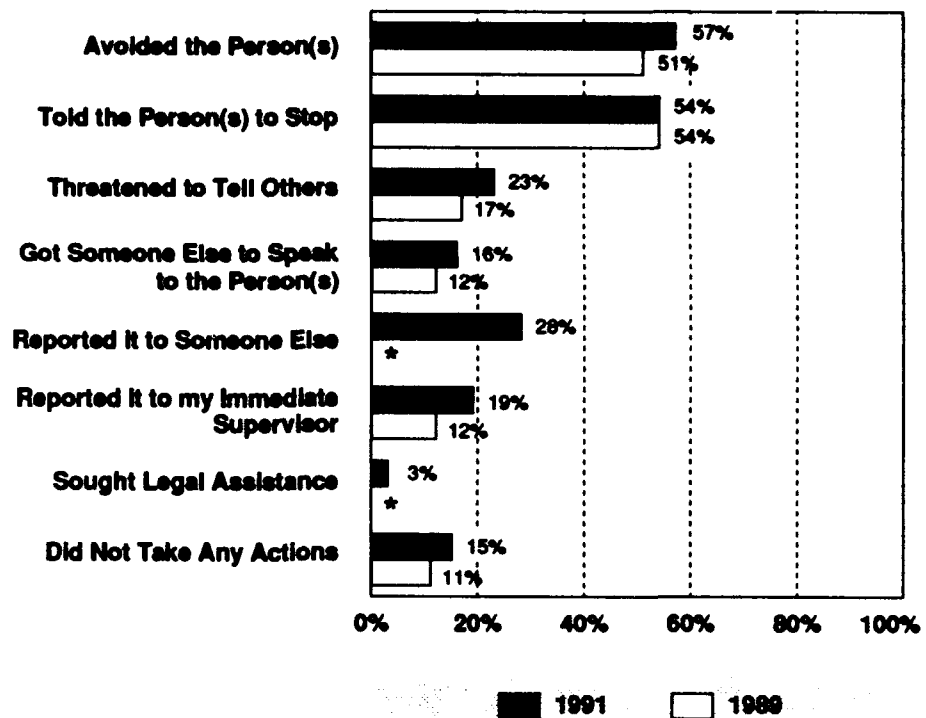


Note. Multiple responses allowed.

\*Significant increase ( $p \leq .01$ )

\*\*Reported it to Someone Else and Sought Legal Assistance were not on the 1989 survey.

**Figure 6. Actions taken by female enlisted victims after experiencing sexual harassment.**



Note. Multiple responses allowed.

\*Reported it to Someone Else and Sought Legal Assistance were not on the 1989 survey.

**Figure 7. Actions taken by female officer victims after experiencing sexual harassment.**

As found in most surveys of sexual harassment, only a small percentage of victims took formal action. In 1991, 8% of enlisted women filed a grievance after being sexually harassed. This percentage decreased from 12% reported in 1989, but the difference was not statistically significant. Six percent of female officer victims filed a grievance in 1991, a slight but nonsignificant increase from 5% reported in 1989.

The reasons female victims did not file a grievance are outlined in Table 9. As can be seen the most common reasons for not filing a grievance were: (1) "my other actions worked," (2) "I thought it would make my work situation unpleasant," and (3) "I did not think anything would be done." While these three factors were also most common on the 1989 NIOSH Survey, the percentage who attributed their not filing a grievance to "my other actions worked" increased significantly for both enlisted women [ $X^2(1, N = 1,178) = 8.77, p \leq .01$ ] and female officers [ $X^2(1, N = 413) = 7.27, p \leq .01$ ]. Fewer female officers (24%) indicated in 1991 that they did not file a grievance because "I did not think anything would be done" compared to 1989 (35%), but the change was not significant.

**Table 9**  
**Reasons why Female Victims did not File a Grievance**  
**After Experiencing Sexual Harassment**

Action	Female Enlisted		Female Officer	
	1991	1989	1991	1989
Other actions worked	51%*	42%	57%*	43%
Thought work situation would become unpleasant	43%	44%	40%	40%
Did not think anything would be done	38%	40%	24%	35%
Thought evaluations would suffer	24%	24%	21%	24%
Too embarrassed	22%	23%	8%	11%
Too afraid	18%	23%	9%	6%

Note. Multiple responses allowed.

\*Significant increase ( $p \leq .01$ )

## Effects

Only the 1991 NIOSH Survey assessed effects in terms of time away from work and negative physical and psychological consequences. Victims were asked if they used sick call or unplanned leave/liberty due to the sexual harassment and how many hours of work they missed. Seven percent of enlisted women and 2% of female officers reported to sick call due to instances of sexual harassment. Sixteen percent of enlisted women and 8% of female officer victims took unplanned leave/liberty due to the sexual harassment. Table 10 shows a Navy-wide estimate, based on the survey sample data, of the number of hours female victims report being

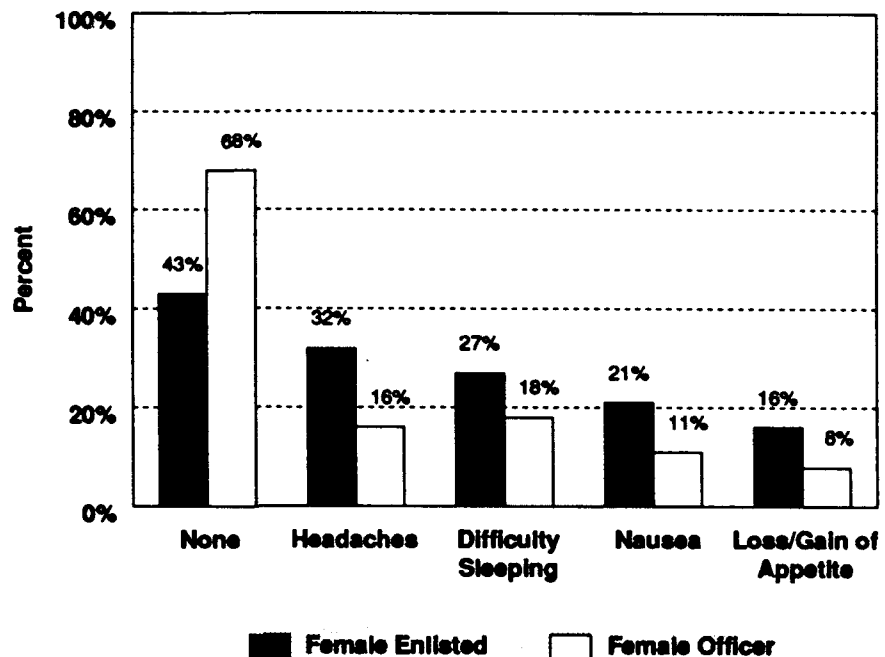
**Table 10**  
**Estimated Navy-Wide Time Away from Work**  
**due to Sexual Harassment**

	Sick Call Hours	Leave/Liberty Hours
Female Enlisted	109,150	325,412
Female Officer	1,320	20,598
Total	110,470	346,000

Notes. Covers the 1-year survey period.  
 Data not collected on 1989 survey.

away from work due to sexual harassment. Note that this estimate of time away from work was for the 1991 survey period.<sup>1</sup>

Victims were asked if they experienced any physical effects due to sexual harassment. The findings are presented in Figure 8. Note that 68% of female officers who were harassed reported no effects, yet more than half of the enlisted women reported experiencing at least one of the effects listed.



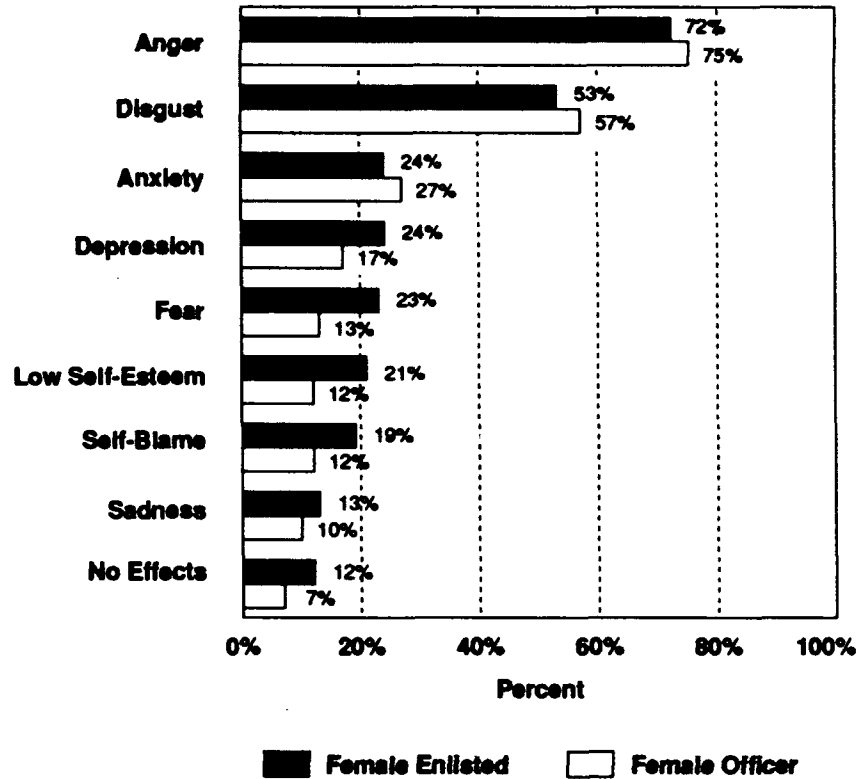
Note. Multiple responses allowed.

**Figure 8. Percentage of women having physical effects because of sexual harassment.**

<sup>1</sup>The estimated time lost was calculated in the following manner. First, the number of female enlisted and female officer on active-duty at the time the survey was administered was obtained from the Navy-wide Demographic Data for Fourth Quarter FY91 (Assistant Chief of Naval Personnel, 1991). The number of female enlisted and female officers harassed was then calculated using the 1991 rates (44% for enlisted females and 33% for female officers). The number of these victims taking sick call was then calculated for each group using the 1991 rates (7% for enlisted females and 2% for female officers). This number was then multiplied by the mean sick call hours for each group. The number of sick call hours for the two groups was added to obtain a total number of sick call hours.

A similar procedure was used to estimate leave/liberty hours used as a result of sexual harassment. The number of female enlisted and female officer victims reporting using leave/liberty was calculated for each group using the 1991 rates (16% for enlisted females and 8% for female officers). This number was then multiplied by the mean leave/liberty hours for each group, and the number of leave/liberty hours for the two groups was added to obtain a total number of leave/liberty hours.

Victims were also asked to identify psychological effects caused by the harassment. The findings are presented in Figure 9. Note that the majority of female victims reported anger and disgust. A small percentage reported no psychological effects.



Note. Multiple responses allowed.

**Figure 9. Percentage of women having psychological effects because of sexual harassment.**

## Research Version Results

Figure 10 shows the different rates of sexual harassment obtained from: (1) the 1991 NEOSH Survey Standard Version that asked respondents directly if they had been sexually harassed, (2) the 1991 NEOSH Survey Research Version that assessed and calculated rates based on responses regarding eight categories of unwanted sexual behaviors, and (3) the 1991 NPS rates that were assessed and calculated using the same method as the research version of the NEOSH (Quenette, 1992). For the research version of the NEOSH and the NPS, the sexual harassment rate was computed based on the single and/or multiple occurrence of any one of the eight categories of unwanted sexual behaviors, a method similar to that used in past surveys (Martindale, 1990; USMSPB, 1981, 1988). As can be seen

in Figure 10, sexual harassment rates on the research version of the NEOSH Survey and NPS were similar. Both were clearly higher than the rates obtained on the standard version of the NEOSH Survey.

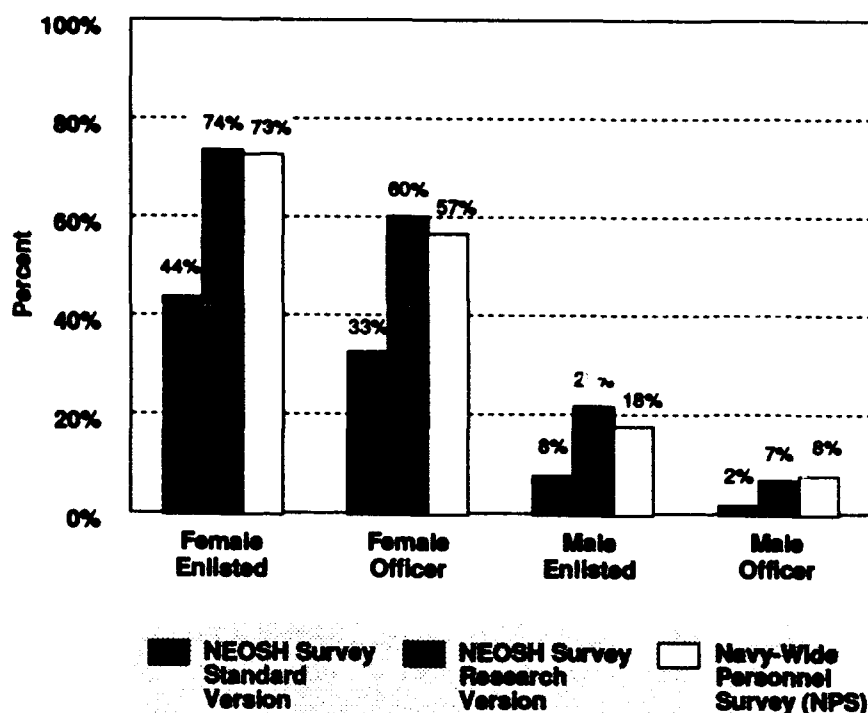


Figure 10. Sexual harassment rates based on different survey questions and calculation procedures.

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## Major Findings

The 1991 NEOSH Survey results indicate increases in the percentage of women officers and enlisted men who report experiencing sexual harassment. The pattern of findings regarding the type of harassment, who initiated the harassment, and the victims' actions after the harassment are very similar to those obtained in 1989. Over 40% of enlisted women and one-third of women officers indicated that they had been sexually harassed during the 1-year period just prior to the survey.

Much of the reported harassment involved what might be considered the "milder" forms of sexual harassment. It should be noted, however, that the milder forms of sexual harassment, if frequent and pervasive, can create a "hostile work environment" (Culbertson & Rosenfeld, 1993; Fitzgerald, 1990). The 1991 data also substantiated the 1989 findings that the most severe forms of sexual harassment (actual or attempted sexual assault and rape) occur to about 1 out of 20 enlisted women. The results failed to support the notion that Navy women are often the target of same-sex harassment. Indeed, less than 1% of women victims report being harassed by other women.

The 1991 results indicated that women and men differed in their perceptions of the occurrence of sexual harassment and of the consequences for engaging in such behavior. This is in line with past research regarding gender differences in perceptions about sexual harassment (Gutek, 1985; Fitzgerald, 1990; Fitzgerald & Ormerod, 1991). Victims of sexual harassment tended to be overrepresented among the junior women compared to their mid-career or senior counterparts. Thus, the data appear to support a model that contends that sexual harassment is a result of the exertion of power or authority by someone higher in the organizational structure (Cleveland & Kerst, 1993; Tangri, Burt, & Johnson, 1982). The fact that a sizable percentage of the victims report harassment from supervisors further justifies acceptance of this model.

The fact that such a large percentage of women report harassment from male co-workers also lends support to a contact hypothesis and sex spillover model of sexual harassment in the workplace (Gutek, 1985; Gutek, Cohen, & Konrad, 1990; Gutek & Morasch, 1982; Tangri, Burt, & Johnson, 1982). Many women in the Navy's active-duty force are entering male-dominated work settings and often are gender pioneers in a work group or even in the entire command. In general most women in active-duty jobs are in settings where women are a minority compared to men, and they may be one of the first women to enter the work setting.



Interestingly, African-American and Hispanic women were not harassed more than White women. In fact, African-American women reported the lowest amount of harassment of the three groups. The organizational model of sexual harassment that considers power as a key variable would predict that the impact of both racism and sexism would result in racial/ethnic minority women experiencing more, not less, sexual harassment. The NEOSH Survey data is in contrast to findings reported by Fain and Anderton (1987) and Gruber and Bjorn (1982) that minority women experience more harassment than White women.

Yet the NEOSH Survey findings are similar to those found by Niebuhr and Boyles (1991) in their analysis of the DOD harassment survey data by racial/ethnic group. This may indicate a unique situation within the military services since both of these findings were based on active-duty personnel. Or possibly this is the result of a situation where White men are less likely to harass minority women than they are White women. The finding might also be explained by cultural differences that influence judgements about whether certain behaviors are interpreted as sexual harassment or not. As stated by DeFour (1990), race and ethnicity are important variables that need to be included in research on sexual harassment in order to better understand how this organizational problem may affect women differentially due to their racial/ethnic background. Terpstra (1993) supports this recommendation by predicting that as diversity of the work force increases, similarly there will be increases in the percentage of minority women who report experiencing harassment.

As in 1989, the organizational status analysis of perpetrators indicates that victims are often harassed by their coworkers. However, for female enlisted and officers, it was also commonly found that supervisors were the alleged perpetrators. Given that a sizable percentage of perpetrators are superiors in the victim's chain of command, the standard grievance procedures and methods for handling problems and disciplinary infractions has not proven effective. Alternate means of reporting and resolving sexual harassment incidents should be considered and improved methods implemented.

Previous surveys have found that sexual harassment can have serious effects on victims. Items added to the 1991 NEOSH Survey documented this impact for active-duty personnel who were harassed. Victims indicated that they had used unplanned leave/liberty or had reported to sick call due to sexual harassment. Over half of enlisted female victims experienced at least one physical effect, and most female victims reported harassment-related psychological effects. Thus, the present results support the conclusion that sexual harassment has serious physical, psychological, and

work-related outcomes (Gutek, 1985; Gutek & Koss, 1993; Terpstra & Baker, 1991). How harassment specifically impacts on teamwork, unit cohesion, and mission effectiveness must be explored.

The overall rates of sexual harassment increased between 1989 and 1991, with the increases being statistically significant for female officers and enlisted males. Although an increase in sexual harassment reports is cause for concern, it is possible that the increase resulted from the Navy's increased training efforts and generally raised consciousness about this issue. Data collected by the 1993 NEOSH Survey will help clarify the nature of this trend. Support for Navy policies and programs to date is reflected in the 1991 perceptual data: most respondents believe the Navy is working to stop sexual harassment. Also, the majority of those surveyed said they know what actions and behaviors are considered sexual harassment.

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## **Comparison to Other Military Surveys**

The rates of sexual harassment from the NEOSH surveys in 1989 and 1991 are much lower than those obtained in other military surveys. The 1988 DOD Survey of Sex Roles in the Active-Duty Military reported that 64% of female and 17% of male respondents (officers and enlisted combined) had experienced at least one form of sexual harassment behavior at least once in the 1-year survey period (Martindale, 1990, 1991). Similarly, as shown in Figure 10, the 1991 NPS, an omnibus personnel survey devoting just a few questions to sexual harassment, found results similar to those of the DOD survey (Quenette, 1992).

Although the overall rates of sexual harassment obtained by the various surveys differ dramatically from NEOSH Survey results, the pattern of findings for the sexual harassment experience is strikingly similar. As in the present survey, other military surveys have found that the milder forms of sexual harassment behaviors are most common and that both occurrence and frequency decrease as the behaviors become more serious.

In addition, the surveys found that victims tend to be those at the most junior level in the organization in terms of power and status. All surveys reported that a sizable amount of harassment came from supervisors in the individual's chain-of-command. Lastly, the other military surveys confirmed that grievances are rarely filed. However, even with these similarities, the differences in overall rates of sexual harassment require some explanation.

## Survey Methodology Discussion

A closer look at the methods used to assess and calculate the percentage experiencing sexual harassment in these various surveys reveals that different methodological approaches may account for the disparity. Reviews of the sexual harassment literature indicate that there is no single accepted definition of sexual harassment and no generally agreed upon method of assessing and calculating sexual harassment rates (Culbertson & Rosenfeld, 1993; Fitzgerald, 1990; Gruber, 1990, 1992; Terpstra & Baker, 1991). Gruber's (1992) review of sexual harassment surveys reported rates of 33-69% in the general population, 42-59% in the public sector, 36-75% in the private sector and 28-37% in the academic sector. While differences in sample size, survey time period, and response rate can account for some of these differences, something more fundamental may have caused the divergence in the military surveys discussed here.

Culbertson and Rosenfeld (1992, 1993) contended that these differences are due, in part, to the wording of the question assessing whether sexual harassment occurred and to the calculation of the rate of harassment. They note that two approaches have been used to determine rates of sexual harassment. Some surveys (e.g., DOD, NPS, USMSPB) ask respondents whether they have experienced any of a list of sexual harassment behaviors. Surveys using this behavioral experiences method have calculated sexual harassment as the single and/or multiple occurrence of a set of these behavior categories, or forms of sexual harassment, regardless of the seriousness or actual frequency of the sexual harassment behavior(s). Although this practice is warranted for the more severe behaviors involving unwanted touching or assault, the single occurrence of less severe behaviors, such as whistles and jokes, may not create the hostile work environment.

While the behavioral experiences approach appears to add an aura of scientific precision, the precision may be illusory. There is no general agreement on what the categories of sexual harassment behaviors should be—they differ from survey to survey (Gruber, 1990; Fitzgerald, 1990). Furthermore, there is often widespread disagreement that all or some of the behaviors falling within a category constitute sexual harassment. For example, one study found that while almost everyone agreed that sexual touching and sexually-related job threats constitute sexual harassment, less than half of working women surveyed agreed that wolf-whistles, repeated requests for dates, and sexual stares and looks are sexual harassment (Terpstra & Baker, 1988).

The NEOSH Survey used a different methodology in assessing and calculating the rate of sexual harassment—one in which the respondents are asked directly whether they have been sexually

harassed. This direct query method has the advantage of recognizing the complexities involved in deciding whether sexually-oriented behavior is sexual harassment, and leaves the interpretation of whether sexual harassment has occurred to the target of the behavior (i.e., the respondent) rather than the researcher. "Sexual harassment is, after all, a matter of individual perception" (Terpstra & Baker, 1991, p. 185).

Because several military sexual harassment surveys have reported rates substantially higher than those of the NEOSH Survey, it was of interest to compare these two measurement approaches in the same survey. The two versions of the NEOSH Survey tested the hypothesis that the direct query and behavioral experiences methods of assessing and calculating rates of harassment would result in different estimates of the percentage of active-duty personnel who were harassed. As Figure 10 showed, the results were quite dramatic. When percentages were determined using the behavioral experiences methodology on the research version of the NEOSH Survey, the sexual harassment rates were clearly higher than those obtained when the standard NEOSH Survey direct query approach was used. Furthermore, rates from the research version were very similar to those obtained on the 1991 NPS which also used the behavioral experiences method.

Thus, asking respondents directly if they have been sexually harassed provides a much different and lower rate of sexual harassment than if respondents are asked if they have experienced any of a series of categories of unwanted sexual behaviors, and a rate is calculated based on these responses. It is believed that one reason why the standard NEOSH Survey method results in lower harassment rates has to do with people's interpretation of unwanted sexual behavior as sexual harassment. Whether an unwanted sexual behavior is interpreted as sexual harassment most likely depends on a variety of factors, such as the characteristics of the perpetrator, the type and frequency of behaviors experienced, and the consequences of these behaviors for the victim, both professionally and personally (cf. Culbertson & Rosenfeld, 1993; Fitzgerald, 1990; Gutek, 1985). These data suggest support for this process of decision making regarding whether harassment has occurred or not.

### **Methodology Comparison Conclusions**

The comparison of the two methodologies raises the question of how an overall percentage, or rate, of sexual harassment should be assessed and calculated. The behavioral experiences approach—that is, including all respondents who experienced one of a series of sexual harassment behaviors at least once, regardless of whether the person interpreted the behavior to be sexual harassment—should be evaluated further. Most likely a combination of form and frequency

of the behaviors needs to be considered in deciding whether sexual harassment has occurred, particularly for the less serious forms of unwanted sexual behavior. One possible alternative was used by Gutek (1985) in her landmark survey of sexual harassment of workers in Los Angeles county. Her survey used the behavioral experiences approach but also took into account whether or not the respondent considered the behavioral experiences to be sexual harassment in determining the amount of sexual harassment which occurred.

Determining the rate of sexual harassment provides a bench-mark from which to gauge the effectiveness of policies and procedures designed to combat it. But the research findings reported here confirm the complexities of reducing sexual harassment to a single number or percentage. These results also demonstrate that care must be used when designing surveys to measure the occurrence of sexual harassment. The designers of surveys that contain sexual harassment items should have some expertise in the area beyond the ability to simply write good survey items (Culbertson & Rosenfeld, 1993).

In addition, caution should be employed when comparing the results from sexual harassment surveys that do not use identical methodologies (Gruber, 1990, 1992). As Martindale (1990) states, "Although the term incidence has been used to refer to these kinds of percentages, it is incorrect to refer to self-report data from any survey of sexual harassment as incidence data, since the term incidence implies a level of measurement precision not currently attainable" (p. 10).

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## Conclusions

The results of the 1991 NEOSH Survey indicate that sexual harassment continues to be a problem for the Navy's active-duty force, despite concerted efforts to eliminate it. However, most respondents believe that things are being done in the Navy to try to stop sexual harassment. To eradicate sexual harassment, behavior changes in the workplace represent the Navy's initial challenge. Subsequent changes in attitudes and organizational climate and culture will be more complex. "The military faces a real challenge in enforcing an attitudinal change among the male majority when these unwanted attitudes are still dominant in the society at large" (Wilds, 1990, p. 12).

Progress towards reducing and eliminating sexual harassment may be quickened in the aftermath of Tailhook. On 23 April 1993, the Pentagon released the DOD Inspector General's report on the events at the 1991 Tailhook Association convention (Inspector General, Department of Defense, 1993). The report indicated that 83 women and 7 men were sexually assaulted at the convention. A total of 117 officers were implicated for deeds of sexual misconduct or conduct unbecoming an officer.<sup>2</sup>

In the wake of the Tailhook scandal, the Navy has reiterated its zero tolerance policy, instituted mandatory separation of individuals for serious sexual harassment offenses, and required that all Navy personnel attend a full day of sexual harassment prevention training. These are all necessary components of an organizational program to combat sexual harassment (Flynn, 1991; Howard, 1991; Segal, 1992).

As one Navy leader stated, "as the Navy's zero tolerance policy and training programs sink in, the numbers will get better, and sailors will learn that sexual harassment is just as unacceptable as racial or other kinds of discrimination" (Pexton, 1992, p. 14). The NEOSH Survey is a vehicle to evaluate the effectiveness of Navy initiatives in combating sexual harassment. The 1993 NEOSH Survey results will undoubtedly shed more light on the Navy's ability to reduce the occurrence of this complex and troubling organizational issue.

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<sup>2</sup>The 1991 Tailhook Association convention took place in September 1991, about one month before the 1991 NEOSH Survey was administered. Since widespread media coverage of the Tailhook Association convention began several months after the survey administration, and the survey asked about incidents of sexual harassment in the 12 months prior to the survey's administration, survey results were more than likely not affected. Thus, the impact, if any, of the events surrounding the Tailhook Association convention on sexual harassment rates in the Navy will be determined by the 1993 NEOSH Survey, administered in the Fall of 1993.

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## **Recommendations**

1. The Chief of Naval Operations promulgate the 1991 NEOSH Survey findings to commanding officers to provide them with empirical data concerning the occurrence of sexual harassment and its impact on active-duty personnel.
2. The Chief of Naval Education and Training (CNET OOQM) integrate the survey findings into Command Training Team instructor training conducted at CNET Command Managed Equal Opportunity (CMEO) training sites. It is recommended that the survey findings also be integrated into the Navy's annual sexual harassment training and CMEO training given by authorized Equal Opportunity Program Specialists.
3. Given the sensitivity and importance of the Navy's efforts to prevent sexual harassment, it is recommended that the findings presented here be made widely available to Navy media.

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